

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 NEA-10 IO-12 RSR-01 /133 W

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R 131700 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1524

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2073

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS, ET

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIAN FONMIN VISIT TO TUNISIA

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 3821

B. ADDIS ABABA 4376

C. TUNIS 1887

1. ETHIOPIAN FONMIN MINASSIE HAILE DURING VISIT TUNIS
APRIL 11-12 WAS RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AND
CONSULTED WITH FONMIN MASMOUDI. TUNISIAN PRESS, AS WELL AS
MASMOUDI HIMSELF, OBVIOUSLY PRESSED HAILE HARD ON ETHIOPIAN
POSITION IN MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT AND REPORTS OF ISRAELI
PENETRATION IN RED SEA. HAILE TOLD PRESS THAT ETHIOPIAN
POSITION IN MID EAST " IS WELL KNOWN AND CONSISTS IN DEMANDING
ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES" AND SUPPORT FOR
UN RES 242.

2. DURING EXCHANGE OF TOASTS AT DINNER HOSTED BY MASMOUDI,
LATTER PUSHED HARD ON RED SEA QUESTION: HE REPEATED REPORTS
THAT ISRAELIS ARE PRESENT IN RED SEA; SAID IT WOULD BE
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HELPFUL IF THESE ALLEGATIONS COULD BE REFUTED BY CONCRETE ACTS; THEN CONCEDED TO AHILE THAT " FORTUNATELY IN COURSE OF YOUR VISIT YOU HAVE BROUGHT US DENIAL OF THESE ALLEGATIONS". HAILE IN HIS TURN CHARACTERIZED REPORTS OF ISRAELI PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA AND IN RED SEA AS TOTALLY WITHOUT FOUNDATION, AND INVITED " ANYONE INTERESTED TO GO TO THE REGION TO FIND OUT FOR THEMSELVES" THAT REPORT WERE FALSE.

3. THERE WAS LITTLE PUBLIC MENTION OF PRINCIPAL PURPOSE HAILE' S VISIT: ACCRODING REF A, TO CONSULT WITH GOT ON IMPLICATIONS BENGHAZI ISLAMIC FONMINS CONFERENCE. IN HIS SPEECH, MASMOUDI ONLY EXPRESSED TUNISIA' HOPE THAT ALL PROBLEMS IN REGION SHOULD BE RESOLVED IN OAU CONTEXT.

4. COMMENT: IN VIEW REF B, OUTLINING IBG VIEW THAT SOMALIA INTENDS MAKE MAJOR ISSUE OF HORN OF AFRICA TERRITORIAL DISPUTE AT OAU SUMMIT IN MAY, FONMIN HAILE PROBABLY COULD TAKE LITTLE COMFORT FROM MASMOUDI' S POSITION. WE KNOWN THAT GOT AND ESPECIALLY MASMOUDI HAVE REPROACHED ETHIOPIA IN PAST FOR LATTER' S FRIENDSHIP WITH ISRAEL, AND WE SUSPECT THAT GOT WOULD BE INCLINED TAKE SOMALI SIDE IN ANY DISPUTE WITHIN OAU. HOWEVER, WE WILL FOLLOW UP WITH TUNISIAN FONOFF AS SOON AS OCCASION PRESENTS ITSELF TO GET FURTHER BACKGROUND ON VISITS OF BOTH SOMALI FONMIN ARTEH AND FONMIN HAILE.
SEELYE

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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